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FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, NATO
SUBJ: MBFR: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET DEPREP OF FEBRUARY 16, 1977
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1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION FEB 16 WITH SOVIET DEPREP SHUSTOV, US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ABOUT SOVIET COUNTING RULES AND DATA. IN HIS REPLIES, SHUSTOV INSISTED THAT THE EAST HAD IN ITS TABLED FIGURES COUNTED ALL PACT MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE REDUCTION AREA AND HAD EXCLUDED ONLY NAVAL PERSONNEL, RESERVISTS, CIVILIANS WORKING FOR THE FORCES, AND PERSONNEL OF POLICE AND INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS.
END SUMMARY.

2. US DEPREP TOLD SHUSTOV THAT THERE WAS DEEPLY ROOTED

SKEPTICISM AMONG THE WESTERN DELEGATIONS AS TO WHETHER THE EAST HAD IN FACT INCLUDED ALL EASTERN MILITARY PERSONNEL, AS THE EAST NOW CLAIMED, IN THE DATA WHICH THE EAST TABLED ON JUNE 10, 1976. THERE WERE TWO STRONG REASONS FOR THIS SKEPTICISM; THE WIDE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WESTERN DATA AND THE TOTALS THE EAST HAD GIVEN FOR THOSE SAME FORCES, AND THE INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN EASTERN DATA AND ACTUAL EASTERN BEHAVIOR FOR THE FIRST TWO-AND-ONE-HALF YEARS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. US DEPREP SAID WESTERN DATA ON WARSAW PACT FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA HAD BEEN REFINED DURING THE PERIOD OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND AN ERROR OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN EASTERN AND WESTERN FIGURES FOR WARSAW PACT FORCES SEEMED EXCLUDED.

SECOND, EASTERN BEHAVIOR AND THE POSITIONS THE EAST HAD TAKEN ON INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS OF THE VIENNA TALKS SINCE THEIR OUTSET CLEARLY INDICATED THAT THE EAST ITSELF WAS AWARE OF A SUBSTANTIAL SUPERIORITY IN MILITARY MANPOWER IN ITS FAVOR. IT WAS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT THAT THE EAST HAD TABLED DATA AND THAT STATED EASTERN COUNTING RULES APPEARED SIMILAR TO THOSE USED BY THE WEST IN COMPILING ITS OWN DATA. BUT THESE BENEFITS WOULD BE WIPE AWAY AND A VERY SERIOUS SITUATION WOULD ENSURE IN THE TALKS UNLESS REASONABLE CAUSES FOR THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN
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WESTERN AND EASTERN FIGURES COULD BE FOUND.

4. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHY THE EAST OODNCE THE OUTSET OF THE VIENNA TALKS HAD SOUGHT TO REFUTE WESTERN STATEMENTS THAT THE EAST HAD A CONSIDERABLE SUPERIORITY IN MILITARY MANPOWER BY USING THE ARGUMENT THAT THE WEST'S ANALYSIS WAS BASED ONLY ON GROUND FORCE MANPOWER AND THAT, WHEN ALL FORCE COMPONENTS WERE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, THIS PARITY WOULD NOT EXIST. LATER, THE EAST HAD AMPLIFIED THIS ARGUMENT BY CLAIMING THERE WAS APPROXIMATE PARITY IN THE OVERALL FORCES IN THE AREA. IF THE EAST HAD BELIEVED FROM THE OUTSET OF THE TALKS, AS SHUSTOV CLAIMED, THAT THERE WAS NEAR PARITY OF MILITARY MANPOWER IN THE AREA, WHY HAD IT USED THIS CIRCUITOUS ARGUMENT? WHY HAD IT NOT MERELY STATED THAT THE WESTERN STATEMENTS ABOUT DISPARITY IN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER WERE WRONG AND THAT THERE WAS NEAR PARITY? THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A MUCH MORE SIMPLE AND DIRECT METHOD OF ARGUMENTATION. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT A MORE DIRECT EASTERN CHALLENGE OF WESTERN CLAIMS OF AN EASTERN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER SUPERIORITY WOULD HAVE INCREASED PRESSURES ON THE EAST TO ENTER INTO DATA DISCUSSION EARLY IN THE TALKS. THIS IT DID NOT WISH TO DO.

5. US DEPREP SAID US REPS HAD FOUND UNCONVINCING TARASOV'S ANSWER ON FEB 12 THAT, RATHER THAN PARITY OF MANPOWER, THE EAST'S MAIN INTEREST HAD BEEN THAT EACH DIRECT PARTICIPANT

REDUCE ITS FORCES BY AN EQUAL PERCENTAGE. IF THE EAST HAD CONSIDERED FROM THE OUTSET THAT THERE WAS PARITY OF MANPOWER IN THE AREA, WHY HAD IT NOT AGREED TO PARITY ON THE CONDITION THAT EACH PARTICIPANT SHOULD TAKE A SHARE OF REDUCTIONS TO A LOWER LEVEL OF PARITY PROPORTIONATE TO ITS PRESENT SHARE OF THE TOTAL FORCES OF ITS ALLIANCE? SUCH A POSITION WOULD HAVE BEEN IN CONFORMITY WITH THE EASTERN POSITION AND WITH CLAIMED EASTERN DATA AND WOULD ALSO HAVE ADVANCED THE NEGOTIATIONS. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT, IN THE FACE OF REPEATED WESTERN CLAIMS OF EASTERN MANPOWER SUPERIORITY, THE EAST WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN IN A SITUATION TO TAKE THE POSITION DESCRIBED WITHOUT EITHER TABLING DATA OR
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RISKING A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING LATER WHEN IT TABLED ITS DATA SHOWING PARITY.

6. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHY THE SOVIETS HAD MADE SUCH A BIG ISSUE OF THEIR DESIRE TO EXCLUDE FROM COUNTING PACT MILITARY PERSONNEL THE EAST CLAIMED WERE PERFORMING FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY CIVILIANS IN THE WEST. THIS HAD CLEARLY BEEN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE A PERCEIVED EASTERN SUPERIORITY IN MILITARY MANPOWER. WHY AFTER LONG DISCUSSION HAD THE SOVIETS INFORMALLY AGREED IN DECEMBER OF 1975 TO COUNTING RULES INCLUDING ALL PACT MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THEN RETRACTED THAT AGREEMENT AND REOPENED THE ARGUMENT THAT THOSE PERSONNEL OF WARSAW PACT FORCES PERFORMING FUNCTIONS ALLEGEDLY PERFORMED BY CIVILIANS IN THE WEST SHOULD BE EXCLUDED, AND THEN MOVED ONCE AGAIN TO THE POSITION THAT THESE PERSONNEL SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE COUNT? THIS ACTIVITY CLEARLY INDICATED AN ATTEMPT TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE EAST'S NUMERICAL MILITARY MANPOWER SUPERIORITY OVER THE WEST. WHY HAD THE EAST PLACED SO MUCH EMPHASIS ON THE REALLOCATION OF POLISH AND CZECH GROUND-BASED NATIONAL AIR DEFENSE PERSONNEL FROM GROUND TO AIR? SUCH EMPHASIS WAS APPROPRIATE IN THE WESTERN PROGRAM, WHICH FOCUSED ON REDUCTION OF GROUND FORCE PERSONNEL ONLY, BUT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR THE EASTERN PROGRAM OF EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTION OF BOTH GROUND FORCE AND AIR FORCE PERSONNEL, PARTICULARLY IF THE EAST ACTUALLY CONSIDERED THAT THERE WAS OVERALL PARITY IN MILITARY PERSONNEL ON BOTH SIDES.

7. SHUSTOV BECAME VISIBLY NERVOUS AT THE MENTION OF THE DECEMBER 1975 SOVIET AGREEMENT TO INCLUDE ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL. HE SAID IT WAS BETTER NOT TO MENTION THIS INFORMAL DISCUSSION FURTHER. AS TO THE MORE GENERAL QUESTION OF INCLUDING IN THE EASTERN FIGURES WARSAW PACT MILITARY PERSONNEL PERFORMING FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY CIVILIANS IN THE WEST, MOSCOW AUTHORITIES HAD DECIDED IN THE SPRING OF 1976 AFTER THE ISSUE HAD BEEN THOROUGHLY DEBATED IN VIENNA THAT THERE WOULD BE "FEWER COMPLICATIONS" WITH THE WEST IF THEY AGREED TO INCLUDE THESE
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PERSONNEL IN THE EASTERN COUNT. SHUSTOV DID NOT REPLY TO THE SECOND QUESTION CONCERNING THE EAST'S INSISTANCE ON THE REALLOCATION OF POLISH AND CZECH AIR DEFENSE PERSONNEL.

8. US DEPREP REFERRED TO TARASOV'S CONTENTION IN THE FEB 12 CONVERSATION THAT THE WEST HAD NOT BASED ITS FIGURES ON ACTUAL EASTERN STRENGTH BUT RATHER ON THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF TABLE OF ORGANIZATION STRENGTH. US DEPREP SAID THE WEST HAD TAKEN LOWER MANNING INTO ACCOUNT IN COMPILING ITS FIGURES ON WARSAW PACT FORCES. HENCE, LOW MANNING COULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN NATO AND WARSAW PACT FIGURES ON WARSAW PACT FORCES. SHUSTOV SAID THE WEST SHOULD PRODUCE ITS EVIDENCE THAT EASTERN FIGURES WERE WRONG. THE EAST COULD NOT ARTIFICIALLY CREATE EXTRA TROOPS WHERE THEY DID NOT EXIST.

9. USDEPREP SAID THIS WAS NOT THE WAY IN WHICH THE WEST ENVISAGED FURTHER CONDUCT OF THE DATA DISCUSSION. EACH SIDE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO ANSWER LEGITIMATE QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS DATA ON ITS OWN FORCES. THE BURDEN OF PROOF WAS ON EACH SIDE AS REGARDS ITS OWN FORCES. SHUSTOV WAS TOO EXPERIENCED TO BELIEVE THAT THE WEST WOULD TABLE ITS INFORMATION ON EASTERN FORCES. BUT IF THE EAST COULD PRODUCE CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT THE WEST WAS WRONG IN MATTERS OF DETAIL, THE WEST WOULD REVISE ITS FIGURES TO THAT EXTENT. HOWEVER, US DEPREP WISHED TO REPEAT THAT MINOR ADJUSTMENTS OF THIS KIND COULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR THE DISCREPANCY. IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT THE EAST HAD NOT REPEAT NOT INCLUDED ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE FIGURES IT HAD TABLED. THE DATA DISCUSSION SHOULD CONTINUE IN A BUSINESSLIKE ATMOSPHERE WITHOUT CHARGES OR COUNTERCHARGES. BUT IF AT ITS END, THERE WAS A CONTINUED LARGE DISCREPANCY, THIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS SITUATION.

10. SHUSTOV SAID THERE MUST BE SOME ERROR SOMEWHERE. THE WEST MIGHT IN THE COURSE OF TIME HAVE CONVINCED ITSELF THAT THE EAST WAS ACTING AS THOUGH THE EAST RECOGNIZED THE EXISTENCE OF A SUPERIORITY IN ITS FAVOR BECAUSE THE WEST WANTED TO
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BELIEVE THIS.

11. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHETHER THE EAST HAD CHANGED THE STATUS OF ANY OF ITS FORCES TO RESERVE OR CIVILIAN STATUS IN COMPILING ITS DATA. SHUSTOV SAID THIS HAD NOT BEEN THE CASE. THE ONLY CHANGE OF STATUS IN EASTERN FIGURES WAS WHEN THE EAST HAD ADDED BACK THE SERVICEMEN IT HAD EARLIER WISHED TO EXCLUDE ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY WERE PERFORMING FUNCTIONS PERFORMED BY CIVILIANS IN THE WEST TO THEIR TOTAL FIGURES. IN THE SPRING OF 1976, THE EAST HAD HAD THESE FIGURES IN A SEPARATE COLUMN.

12. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHAT HE THOUGHT THE NEXT STEPS

SHOULD BE IN DATA DISCUSSION. SHUSTOV SAID THE EAST WAS READY TO TABLE NATIONAL TOTALS. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHETHER THE EAST WOULD BE READY TO TABLE US AND SOVIET FIGURES FIRST AND TO DISCUSS THESE FIRST. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT THIS WAS ONLY HIS PERSONAL VIEW SINCE THERE WAS NO SOVIET DELEGATION POSITION ON THIS MATTER AS YET, BUT HE BELIEVED THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE IF ASSURANCES COULD BE GIVEN THAT FIGURES ON THE OTHER NATIONAL FORCES COULD BE TABLED THEREAFTER. US DEPREP SAID HE ASSUMED THE EAST WOULD BE PREPARED TO AGREE TO A DISCLAIMER IF NATIONAL FIGURES WERE TABLED, TO THE EFFECT THAT THIS WOULD BE WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE POSITIONS OF EITHER SIDE. SHUSTOV ASKED US DEPREP IF HE MEANT A DISCLAIMER SIMILAR TO THE ONE WHICH HAD BEEN ADVANCED AT THE TIME OF THE DEFINITIONS DISCUSSION IN THE SPRING OF 1976. US DEPREP SAID YES. SHUSTOV SAID THIS WAS SOMETHING ONE COULD THINK ABOUT.

13. SHUSTOV SAID HE REALIZED THERE HAD BEEN SOME CONFUSION ON THE EASTERN SIDE IN RESPONDING TO THE WESTERN QUESTIONS OF JUNE 29, 1976. IF THE WEST WISHED TO REPOSE THESE QUESTIONS IN THEIR ORIGINAL FORM, THE EAST WOULD ANSWER THEM. HE COMPLAINED THERE HAD BEEN SOME OVERLAPPING IN THE WESTERN QUESTIONS AND IN THOSE POSED IN THE FEB 15 INFORMAL. US DEPREP SAID THIS WAS NATURAL IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

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14. SHUSTOV COMMENTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME ON THE SOVIET SIDE WHO HAD EXPECTED THE WEST TO CHANGE ITS FIGURES. (COMMENT: SHUSTOV APPARENTLY MEANT A CHANGE IN THE SIZE OF THE EASTERN SUPERIORITY CLAIMED BY THE WEST. END COMMENT). BUT HE HIMSELF HAD NOT EXPECTED THIS TO HAPPEN.

15. USDEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHY TARASOV HAD IN THE QUESTIONS THE LATTER HAD POSED ABOUT WESTERN DATA IN THE INFORMAL SESSION OF FEB 9, ASKED THE WEST WHAT WAS THE BASIS OF THE WESTERN CLAIM THAT THERE WAS A DISPARITY OF MORE THAN 150,000 BETWEEN THE TOTAL FOR FORCES OF WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS AND THAT FOR EASTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THE EAST KNEW THAT THE DISPARITY WAS LARGER THAN 150,000 IF ONE TOOK AS A BASIS ONLY THE TOTAL STRENGTH OF THE WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS, WITHOUT OTHER FORCES IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE AREA. DID THE EAST INTEND TO BRING THE FRENCH ISSUE INTO THE DISCUSSION WITH THIS FORMULATION OF THEIR QUESTION? SHUSTOV SAID IT HAD NOT BEEN THE INTENTION OF THE EAST TO RAISE THE FRENCH ISSUE IN THIS QUESTION. THE EAST DID NOT WISH TO RAISE THE FRENCH ISSUE AT THIS TIME, BUT WOULD DO SO LATER.

16. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHETHER THE EAST HAD COUNTED THE PERSONNEL OF THE POLISH PROVINCIAL STAFFS IN ITS DATA. SHUSTOV REPLIED YES. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHY THE EAST HAD USED THE TERM "UNIFORMED" IN ITS STATEMENT THAT IT HAD INCLUDED ALL UNIFORMED WARSAW PACT MILITARY PERSONNEL IN ITS TOTALS. WAS THE TERM "UNIFORMED" SIGNIFICANT OR WAS IT SUPERFLUOUS?

SHUSTOV SAID THE TERM WAS SUPERFLUOUS AND NOT ESSENTIAL TO THE WARSAW PACT DEFINITION.

17. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV WHETHER THERE WERE ANY MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE POLICE AND INTERNAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS EXCLUDED FROM THE WARSAW PACT COUNT. SHUSTOV REPLIED THAT THERE WERE NONE. US DEPREP ASKED SHUSTOV IF THE EAST NOW ACCEPTED THAT THE FRG READY RESERVE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS SECRET

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RESERVES AND NOT INCLUDED IN WESTERN FIGURES. SHUSTOV APPEARED TO INDICATE AGREEMENT.

18. SHUSTOV ASKED US DEPREP WHY THE WEST HAD BROUGHT UP THE ISSUE OF ASSOCIATED MEASURES IN THE PRESENTATION OF THE CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE ON FEB 10, SO EARLY IN THE ROUND. US DEPREP EXPLAINED THAT THE REASON HAD BEEN AS STATED IN CANADIAN REP'S PRESENTATION, THAT THE WEST ATTACHED GREAT WEIGHT TO THESE MEASURES AND CONSIDERED THAT THEY SHOULD BE DISCUSSED NOW IN ORDER TO AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON MAJOR ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE WITHOUT PRIOR DISCUSSION OF ASSOCIATED MEASURES, WITH THE RESULT THAT THERE MIGHT HAVE TO BE MONTHS OF ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION BEFORE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON THESE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF AN AGREEMENT.

19. SHUSTOV SAID THE EAST HAD TWO OBJECTIONS TO THE STABILIZING MEASURES PROPOSED BY THE WEST. IT WAS CLEAR THAT EVENTUALLY STABILIZING MEASURES IF ANY WOULD HAVE TO COVER THE FORCES OF ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS NOT ONLY THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION. THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT WISH TO BE IN A POSITION WHERE IT HAD AGREED IN A FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT TO APPLY STABILIZING MEASURES TO ITS FORCES AND WHERE THERE WOULD BE NO PHASE II AGREEMENT WITH EITHER WESTERN EUROPEAN REDUCTIONS OR STABILIZING MEASURES FOR THESE COUNTRIES. SECOND, THE SOVIET UNION DID NOT WISH TO ENTER INTO MEASURES WHICH WOULD LAME OR PARALYZE ITS FORCES IN THE REDUCTION AREA.

20. US DEPREP SAID SOVIETS HAD AGREED TO CBM'S IN THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT. AS AN EXPERIENCED ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATOR, SHUSTOV KNEW THAT ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT SOLVE SOME PROBLEMS BUT OTHER PROBLEMS AROSE IN THEIR STEAD. ON THESE TWO GROUNDS, STABILIZING MEASURES SHOULD BE PART OF AN AGREEMENT. THE SOVIETS SHOULD AT LEAST COMMENT ON THE WESTERN PROPOSALS SO THAT A DISCUSSION COULD BE STARTED.

21. SHUSTOV SAID HE COULD SEE THAT THE EXISTENCE OF A REDUCTION SECRET

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AGREEMENT MIGHT LEAD TO THE ARTICULATION OF NEW SUSPICIONS, OR OF OLD SUSPICIONS IN NEW FORM. BUT THE SOVIETS HAD NO

INTENTION OF DISCUSSING THE SUBJECT MATTER OF ASSOCIATED
MEASURES AT THIS POINT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, ONLY AFTER MAJOR
ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN AGREED. US DEPREP SAID THAT THE
WEST TOOK A SERIOUS VIEW OF STABILIZING MEASURES AND WOULD
BE BRINGING THEM UP IN INFORMAL SESSIONS.RESOR

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